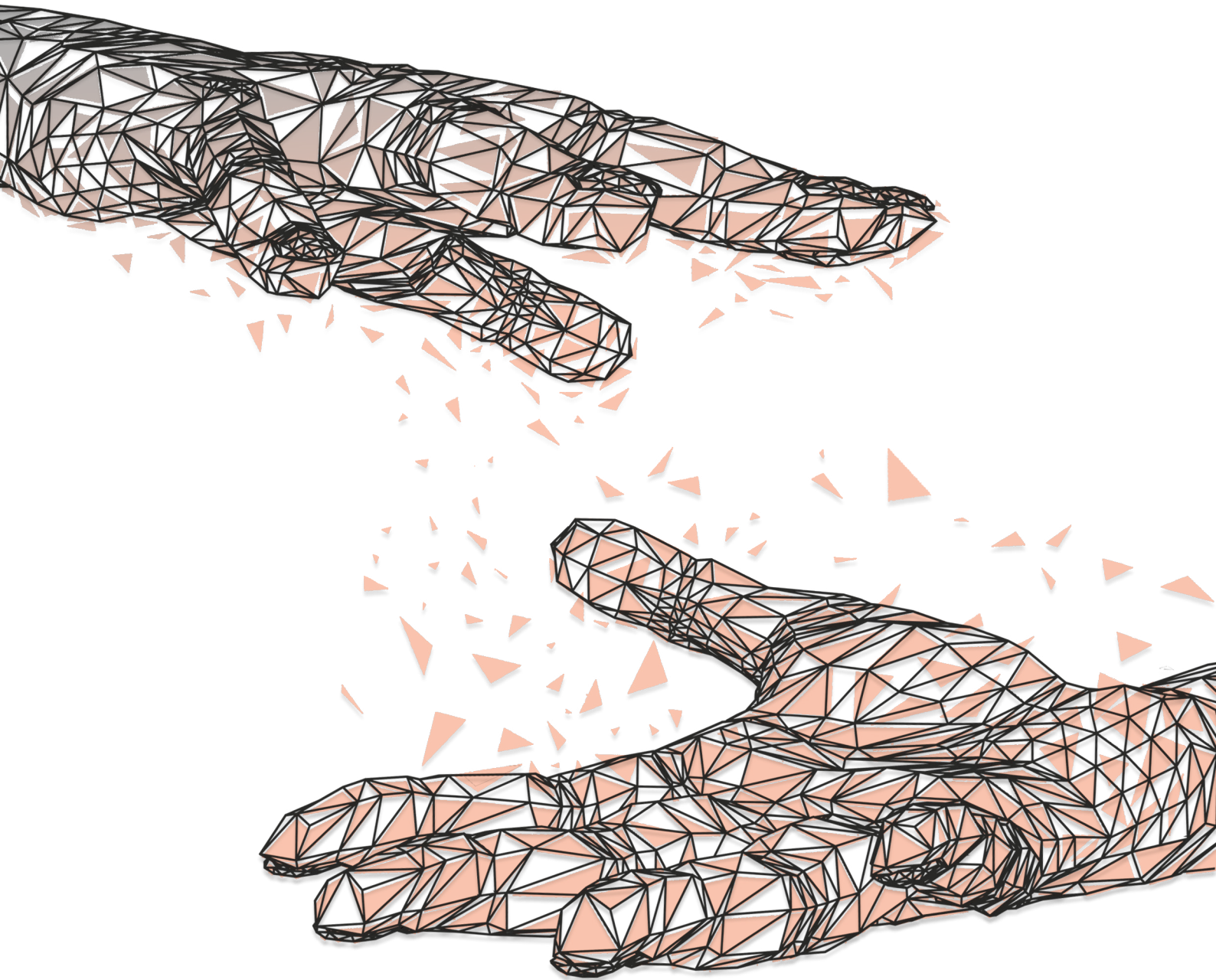


COUNSELLING PRACTITIONER BEGINNER TO ADVANCED



**TEN STAGE COUNSELLEE
EXPERIENCE**

TEN STAGE COUNSELLEE EXPERIENCE

The counsellor / counselee relationship from the perspective of the counselee.

Every individual is different, and every counsellor/counselee relationship will be different. However, there is a likely shape to the process that will take place. The ten stages outline that possible shape and give the practitioner a sense of the framework for that relationship, which has a beginning, a middle and an end.

As the majority of counsellors will have at some point sought out counselling or coaching themselves, reflect on your own experience of having gone through that process through the ten stage process. Write down your thoughts and experiences that relate to each stage, and this will allow you to better empathise with clients of your own:

Pre-contemplation

"The only person who is educated is the one who has learned how to learn and change." Carl R. Rogers

- The desire to change has overtaken the desire to stay the same
- Life may have become unbearable
- Procrastination - putting off facing the issue
- May have had various bad experiences with other counsellors or heard negative stories
- Trawling websites for information
- Picking up information from local information boards, cafes, libraries

My experience, thoughts, behaviours:



TEN STAGE COUNSELLEE EXPERIENCE

Establishment of contact

"Courage doesn't happen when you have all the answers. It happens when you are ready to face the questions you have been avoiding your whole life."

Shannon L. Alder

- Tentative approach
- Email, phone calls
- Daunting, frightening
- Can they trust you?

My experience, thoughts, behaviours:

Did you contact someone and then drop the contact immediately? When did you follow through?



TEN STAGE COUNSELLEE EXPERIENCE

Imagining the relationship

"We may define therapy as a search for value". - Abraham Maslow

- They may have gathered information from all kinds of strange sources and may have quite a skewed impression of what will happen
- Some won't make it to session one

My experience, thoughts, behaviours:

How did I imagine my counselling/coaching before I attended? What was my knowledge or experience before that meeting?



TEN STAGE COUNSELLEE EXPERIENCE

Client and counsellor meet

"The degree to which I can create relationships, which facilitate the growth of others as separate persons, is a measure of the growth I have achieved in myself."

— Carl R. Rogers

- Managing expectations
- Setting boundaries
- Establishing what the current problem is
- Inviting the client to share their problem, how they see it, how they feel about it
- Gathering information
- Deal with any fears or prejudices they may have about counselling
- Help client to paint a vivid picture of the problem
- Establish desire for change
- If they're clear about what they want to change it will help the rest of the process
- The problem may not be what they think it is
- The client may currently be blaming someone else

My experience, thoughts, behaviours:

What state was I in at this point? Did I trust my counsellor/coach? Did I return for the second appointment? How did that first meeting go?



TEN STAGE COUNSELLEE EXPERIENCE

Client gains clarity and focus.

"Our wounds are often the openings into the best and most beautiful part of us." - David Richo

- Building trust and rapport
- How is the problem manifesting in their different life areas?
- Start to establish with more clarity what the problem actually is and how it affects them
- Develop the sense of focus along with clarity, so they know what needs to change
- Client beginning to entertain the idea of accepting responsibility
- May focus more on past than present feelings
- Essential to maintain unconditional positive regard
- May have set goals if appropriate

My experience, thoughts, behaviours:

How long did it take me to start making progress? How did the relationship develop?



TEN STAGE COUNSELLEE EXPERIENCE

...other problems arise

"The best years of your life are the ones in which you decide your problems are your own. You do not blame them on your mother, ecology, or the president. You realise that you control your own destiny." — Albert Ellis

- By uncovering what may be the real cause, it may also bring up other problems
- The client begins to accept responsibility
- The client begins to describe their current feelings more but may also be self-critical
- The client may start to seek more from therapeutic relationship, may still have issues of trust with the counsellor
- Previously established goals may have to be reevaluated

My experience, thoughts, behaviours:

What did you uncover during the process that you hadn't anticipated? Did one issue lead to another?



TEN STAGE COUNSELLEE EXPERIENCE

Possible solutions explored

"I am not what happened to me, I am what I choose to become." — C.G. Jung

- Establishing exactly what the client wants
- We don't provide solutions; the client finds the answers
- Empowerment through responsibility
- Helping client take ownership
- Address fears and blocks
- Help them understand why they're doing what they're doing

My experience, thoughts, behaviours:

How did you approach a solution? What were the critical moments for you?



TEN STAGE COUNSELLEE EXPERIENCE

Apprehension about change

"Most people do not really want freedom, because freedom involves responsibility, and most people are frightened of responsibility." - Sigmund Freud

- Change is inevitable, but we are resistant to change - we experience fixity
- Change is needed, but the client can be apprehensive about change

My experience, thoughts, behaviours:

Did you find resistance in yourself? How did you overcome any resistance to change?



TEN STAGE COUNSELLEE EXPERIENCE

Adapt, adjust and achieve

"A failure is not always a mistake, it may simply be the best one can do under the circumstances. The real mistake is to stop trying. " — B.F. Skinner

- Guiding through this process when they are ready to take those steps
- Help illuminate the benefits of change and the pain of fixity

My experience, thoughts, behaviours:

What was your ultimate experience? Did you experience a major breakthrough?



TEN STAGE COUNSELLEE EXPERIENCE

Relationship ends

"In any given moment we have two options: to step forward into growth or to step back into safety." — Abraham H. Maslow

- Counselling relationships must end at some point
- When the problem has been addressed, it is time to finish the relationship
- Prepare the client for the ending - managing expectations
- Avoiding any dependency or codependency
- You may see the progress and suggesting that you wrap things up in last couple of sessions

My experience, thoughts, behaviours:

Did you end that relationship? Was there resistance from you or perhaps from the therapist/coach? Did the relationship end at the right time or not?

